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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/581,195	06/01/2006	Takao Murakami	060383	2327
23850 7590 06/04/2008 KRATZ, QUINTOS & HANSON, LLP 1420 K Street, N.W. Suite 400 WASHINGTON, DC 20005				
EXAMINER				
IMAS, VLADIMIR				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
2839				
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06/04/2008		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/581,195

Applicant(s)

MURAKAMI ET AL.

Examiner

VLADIMIR IMAS

Art Unit

2839

Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 May 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 6-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) 1 and 2 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 3, 4 and 6-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 3, 4 and 6 - 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fukuda (2003/0077939).

Regarding claim 3, Fukuda, fig. 1-22, discloses an electrical connector 1 comprising: a first female connector housing 2, and a second male connector housing 3 mating with the first female connector housing, the first female connector housing having a male connector housing space 2a with a first peripheral wall 13, the second male connector housing having an inner housing 15 with a second peripheral wall 3c, wherein a tapered surface 2b is integrally formed on one of an inner surface of the first peripheral wall of the first female connector housing, and a projection 3a from an outer surface, positioned at a forward end of the second peripheral wall, of the second male connector housing, the tapered surface inclined in the mating direction of the first female and second male connector housings, the tapered surface engaged with a surface of the other connector housing on mating of the first female and second male connector housings.

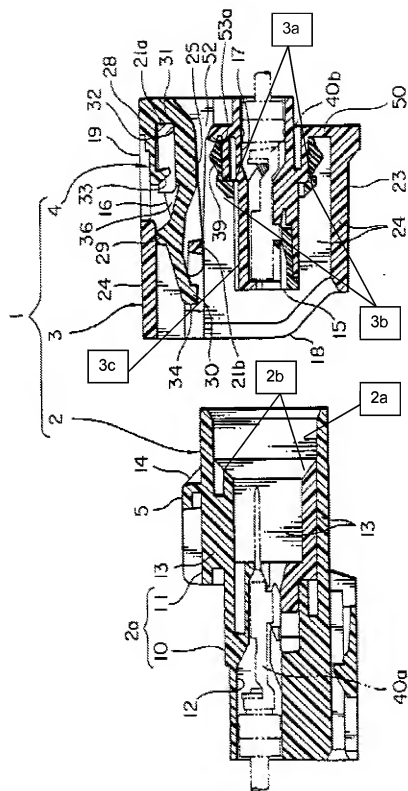


FIG. 12

Regarding claim 4, Fukuda discloses the tapered surface is unitarily formed with the one of connector housings.

Regarding claim 6, Fukuda discloses the second male connector housing has the inner housing formed with a looseness prohibiting protrusion 3a, wherein the tapered surface of the first female connector housing abuts against the looseness prohibiting protrusion on mating the first female and second male connector housings.

Regarding claim 7, Fukuda discloses the looseness prohibiting protrusion has a tapered surface engaged with the tapered surface of the first female connector housing to define a surface-contact state.

Regarding claim 8, Fukuda discloses the inner housing is movable in the connector mating direction and is urged toward the first female connector housing by a resilient member 39.

Regarding claim 9, Fukuda discloses the resilient member is a waterproof packing attached in the second male connector housing, the waterproof packing closely sandwiched between an outer surface of the peripheral wall of the inner housing and an inner surface of the peripheral wall of the first female connector housing on complete engagement of the first female and second male connector housings.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 1 and 2 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The Prior Art of record does not teach or suggest "a tapered surface projecting from an outer surface

of the second peripheral wall and positioned at a **forward end** of the second peripheral wall" as recited in independent claim 1. Claim 2 dependent from claim 1 and is also allowable.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed on November 16, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The Applicant argues "The surface (3b), referred to in the sketch on page 3 of the Office Action, is on an end of the packing (39) that provides a seal in the male housing (3) and is not integrally formed on the housing as required in the present invention." And also "while there may be some contact between identified tapered surfaces (2b) and (3b) in assembly of the connector, these surfaces do not engage with each other on "complete" mating of the two housings." The Examiner respectfully disagrees. As shown clearly in FIG. 4 of Fukuda, the tapered surfaces of housing 3 are not part of the packing (39) but part of wedge like element 3a of the housing 3. And as shown in FIG. 16 of Fukuda (lower part) tapered surfaces of the housing 2 and housing 3 engage with each other (otherwise there is no another purpose of making these surfaces tapered correspondingly each other).

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to VLADIMIR IMAS whose telephone number is (571)272-8288. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, T. Patel can be reached on 571-272-2098. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/V. I./
Examiner, Art Unit 2839,
5/30/2008

/T C Patel/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2839

